

Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEA-10 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20

RSC-01 L-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00

DRC-01 /110 W

----- 105664

R 151449Z JAN 74

FM USINT ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0021

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

UESKW/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 0167

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBSSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 0092

DEPT PASS CAIRO

BEIRUT POUCH DAMASCUS AND BAGHDAD

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: FPRO, XI

SUBJ: FURTHER ALGERIAN REACTION TO TUNISIAN-LIBYAN
UNION

1. FOLLOWING VISITS OF TUNISIAN AND MOROCCAN
DELEGATIONS TO ALGIERS AND TWO LENGTHYSESSIONS JAN 13 AND
14, ALGERIAN COUNCIL OF REVOLUTION AND COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS ISSUED STATEMENT STRONGLY CRITICIZING TUNISIAN-
LIBYAN UNION. FBIS LONDON 142332 CARRIES FULL TEXT,
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WHICH IT IDENTIFIESSS "UNATTRIBUTED COMMENTARY." IT

IS WORTH CAREFUL READING.

2. COMMENT: ALGERIA IS CLEARLY DISPLEASED BOTH WITH THE FACT OF TUNISIAN-LIBYAN UNITY AND THE WAY IN WHICH IT WAS ANNOUNCED. STATEMENT REVEALS ALGERIAN SUSPICIONS THAT OTHER FORCES, UNSPECIFIED BUT OUTSIDE MAGHREB, ARE INVOLVED IN SOME WAY. IT IS ALSO SUFFICIENTLY STRONG IN OPPOSING UNION THAT FURTHER ALGERIAN ACTION TO PREVENT ITS ACHIEVEMENT CANNOT BE EXCLUDED. FINALLY, STATEMENT REVEALS, PERHAPS MORE CLEARLY THAN INTENDED, ALGERIA'S PERCEPTION OF ITSELF AS "FIRST AMONG EQUALS" IN MAGHREB AND OF TUNISIA AS A JUNIOR STATE WHICH SHOULD HAVE SOUGHT ALGERIAN APPROVAL BEFORE ACTING. THERE IS ALSO MORE THAN A HINT OF ALGERIAN PIQUE THAT THE TUNISIAN BRIDE HAS CHOSEN LIBYAN RATHER THAN ALGERIAN SUITOR.

3. BELGIAN EMBASSY SOURCE HAS OLD US THAT BOURGUIBA CONFIDENTIALLY INFORMED BOUMEDIENE IN A GENERAL WAY OF HIS INTENTION TO UNITE WITH LIBYA WHEN HE WAS HERE IN LATE DECEMBER (ALGIERS 0002 NOTAL) BOUMEDIENE REPORTEDLY COUNSELED BOUGUIBA AGAINST TAKING SUCH ACTION PRECIPITOUSLY AND THOUGHT BOURGUIBA HAD AGREED WITH HIM. WE CANNOT CONFIRM THIS EXCHANGE, BUT IT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS AND WOULD CONSTITUTE ADDITIONAL REASON FOR ALGERIA'S CURRENT DISPLEASURE.

4. NEW TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR BOUZIRI ADMITTED TO ME THAT ALGERIANS HAVE BEEN VERY UPSET OVER MERGER. HE THOUGHT THEY HAD OVERREACTED AND WOULD RELAX WHEN THEY SAW UNION IN PROPER CONTEXT AS FIRST STEP TOWARD MAGHREB UNITY WITH LIBYA TURNING WEST RATHER THAN EAST. HE REFERRED TO JERBA ANNOUNCEMENT AS "REALLY A UNION IN PRINCIPLE" AND SUGGESTED THAT IMPLEMENTATION WOULD BE LENGTHY AND PERHAPS NOT COMPLETE PROCESS. HE THOUGHT ALGERIANS WOULD BE MULLIFIED BY MASMOUDI'S REMOVAL.
EAGLETON

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.
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